

ETHYL CORPORATION

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY
TO, 451 FLORIDA BLVD
BATON ROUGE, LA. 70801

May 19, 1986

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



446769

RECEIVED

JUN 06 1986

600 DETROIT DIST.

Mr. Steve Cunningham
Remedial Action Section
Site Assessment Unit
Stephen Mason Building
530 M. Allegan
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

Fire Marshall William LeGault's attached report on the removal of the buried gasoline tanks from the Ferndale Laboratory property is the best description available because he followed the operation more closely than anyone else did. As you know, the tanks were removed because Mr. LeGault encouraged us to do so.

I have stapled in photographs of the tank areas as I promised. There are also three loose photographs taken in the woods during our study in April, 1984.

Note that the description in the report of the recovery of the two little aluminum borohydride cylinders in 1984 seems to me to indicate to the reader a more hazardous operation than that actually was. Aluminum borohydride releases hydrogen as it decomposes, and we just broke the valve off of the cylinder remotely to let the hydrogen escape. Hydrogen burns spontaneously, and sometimes with a sharp report, but it does not truly detonate on release.

This report shows there will not be any future contamination problems from the fuel tanks and completes this facet of the study. I will telephone you next week to review what additional information will be needed to complete this investigation.

Very truly yours,

C. E. Colvin

CEC:egh
Attachments

cc: ☒ C. Bach
☒ E. Park